Matthew 5:43-48 (NIV)
Jesus Preaches about Loving Your Enemy

Pastor Joseph Clark – December 18, 2020

43 "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor[a] and hate your
enemy.' 44 But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute
you, 45 that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise
on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 46 If
you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax
collectors doing that? 47 And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing
more than others? Do not even pagans do that? 48 Be perfect, therefore, as your
heavenly Father is perfect.

Message:

Jesus taught us that we defeat our enemies by loving them. That a person can only threaten us to the extent that we consider them a threat. They can only be an enemy to the extent that we consider them an enemy. That, regardless of the harm that our enemy causes us, that we are to remain strong in living our faith. To pray for our enemy and not to engage them in battle and not to return vindictiveness, is to glorify God. It is also incredibly challenging as we all suffer from human ego. If our enemy throws manure at us. We should restrain our impulses to retaliate, otherwise we dirty our hands. Likewise, when our enemies attack us, let our faith and restraint shine on them.

"Do I not destroy my enemies when I make them my friends?"

- Abraham Lincoln

"When you meet someone and you find that they are prejudiced against your kind, it might be your chance not to confirm but to be the one to finally change their mind."

- Criss Jami, Healology

"We must discover the power of love, the redemptive power of love. ... That's why Jesus says, “Love your enemies.” Because if you hate your enemies, you have no way to redeem and to transform your enemies.”

- Rev. Martin Luther King

If you take the 'love your enemy' out of Christianity, you've 'unChristianed' the Christian faith.

- Miroslav Volf

17 Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and let not your heart be glad when he stumbles, 18 lest the Lord see it and be displeased, and turn away his anger from him.

-Proverbs 24:17-18

<u>*Sources:*</u>

"BibleGateway." New International Version (NIV) - Version Information - BibleGateway.com, www.biblegateway.com/versions/New-International-Version-NIV-Bible/.

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